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9/15/78

Ref

AR 198

AA/HR

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

DATE: September 15, 1978

PARTICIPANTS: [ ] and BL  
John Corr, Information Officer

SUBJECT: Videla-Mondale, Military Unity,  
Political Activity

PLACE: A Restaurant in Buenos Aires

[ ] covered the Videla visit to Rome. He said:

Videla told Vice President Mondale that the Argentine Government would "seriously consider" a visit of the Inter-American Human Rights Commission. Mondale, in turn, gave some indication that the Ex-Im Bank decision on credit for Yacyreta could be reversed.

General Suarez Mason meets monthly with a UCR group for lunch under the auspices of Suarez Mason's close friend, Radical Leader Carlos Perette, vice president under Illia. At the last luncheon meeting, Suarez Mason warned UCR leaders not to sign multi-party public political declarations because this would adversely affect their relations with the Government. Suarez Mason also harshly criticized Martinez de Hoz.

General Viola has emerged as a harsh critic of Martinez de Hoz, complaining about having inflation and recession at the same time. Balbin's recent criticism of Martinez de Hoz was uncharacteristically harsh.

Martinez de Hoz has aroused much resentment because of his treatment of the Argentina commitment to build the Santa Cruz-Trinidad railroad. Recently, in a conference in Bolivia on how the second (Yacuiba-Trinidad) stage of the railroad would be built, representatives of the Argentine Economy Ministry withdrew the Argentine commitment to finance the second stage, to the consternation of Argentine Foreign Ministry representatives who had arrived at the conference set to honor their second-stage financial commitment. The financing problem was put off. Many Argentines feel that if the railroad, designed to ultimately connect Argentina to the Amazon basin, is not speedily completed, Brazil will step in and help the Bolivians build it.

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)  
U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/TPS  
Margaret P. Grief, Director  
( ) Release (X) Excise ( ) Deny  
Exemption(s): BL  
Declassify: ( ) In Part (X) In Full  
( ) Classify as ( ) Extend as ( ) Downgrade to  
Date Declassify on Reason

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2.

Massera is working with the dregs of the Peronist labor movement. [redacted] asked me what would be the Embassy attitude toward Massera if he emerged as more of a democratic alternative than Videla. I replied we don't get involved in internal affairs.) B6

cc:  
AMB  
DCM  
POL  
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